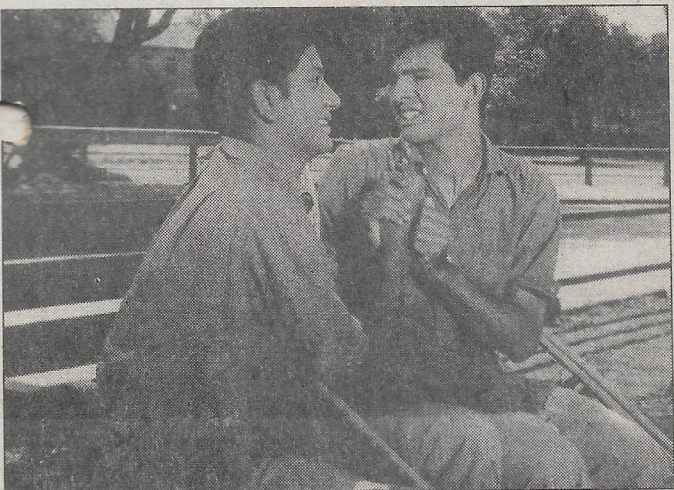


film-makers. We explore ten films that explored the different dimensions of this one ship that never really sinks

DOSTI (1964)

A touching film made by the Rajshris, *Dosti* as the title indicates, focussed on the bond between two boys, one blind and the other lame.



Played by Sushil Kumar and Sudhir Kumar, *Dosti* journeys with these two friends through a path strewn with obstacles. Together the boys combat every handicap and as their friendship blossoms, they cease to feel impaired. The blind boy carries his friend on his shoulders and suddenly discovers that the world is no longer dark. He can see! His crippled friend also miraculously discovers the use of limbs even though they're not his, and can walk for the first time in his life without crutches.

SANGAM (1964)

TWO friends, Sunder (Raj Kapoor) and Gopal (Rajendra Kumar) are in love with the same girl, Radha (Vyjayanthimala). But while Sunder



wears his heart on his sleeve, Gopal cloaks his feelings in a veil of silence. He only confesses his love for this woman in white when Sunder who's an Airforce pilot, is lost in combat and feared killed. Radha reciprocates Gopal's feelings. But when Sunder comes back from the clutches of death, resurrected by his love for Radha, Gopal silently pays the price.

Radha marries Sunder and during the course of an extended honeymoon grows to love him. Life's bliss till Sunder stumbles on a love letter Gopal had once written and Radha had sentimentally hoarded. The knowledge that Gopal had loved Radha too, destroys Sunder and the marriage. It destroys Gopal too. Suddenly, the two friends are in a race to sacrifice their love on the altar of friendship, no one thinking to ask the woman whom she wants to share her life with. Gopal eventually gives up his life so his friend can live and love again. Friendship triumphs and so did the film, at the box-office.

SHOLAY (1975)

YEH dosti hum nahin todenge, todenge dum magar tera saath na chodenge... This song put into words the ties that bound Jai (Amitabh Bachchan) and Veeru (Dharmendra). The two friends are as different as chalk from cheese. While Jai seethes and simmers Veeru bubbles with life and charm. Even the women they choose to dream of a life with are diametrically different. Basanti (Hema Malini) is a fast-talking *tangewali* while Radha (Jaya Bachchan) is a silent widow. Yet, despite their contrasting temperaments the two friends are determined to be together—in life



FRIENDS AR

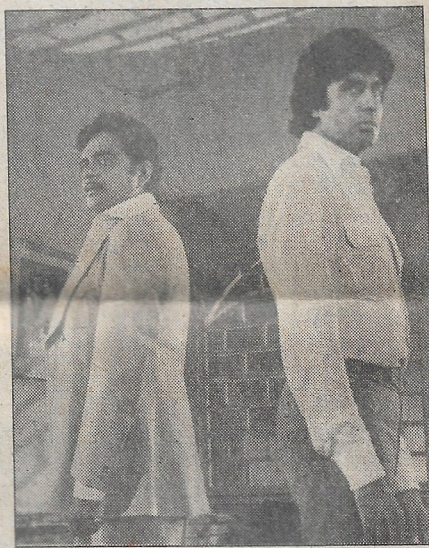


and death.

They are roped in by the *thakur* and Radha's father-in-law (Sanjeev Kumar) to finish the dreaded dacoit who wiped out his family. Their confrontation with Gabbar Singh brings them to the jaws of death. In the face of the terrible unknown, both Veeru and Jai are ready to lay down their lives to save the other. Eventually, a coin is flipped to decide who will stay and who will escort Basanti to safety. Jai stays and dies. Veeru leaves and lives. Realising too late that the coin his friend has been flipping all these years is a dupe. It certainly helps Jai cheat his friend even in the final game... cheat on death and spare Veeru his life.

DOSTANA (1980)

SHATRUGHAN Sinha Sand Ambabh Bachchan are two friends who are determined their *dostana* will weather every storm, remain unbroken even if the whole world turns against them. But the bonds snap when Shatru discovers that his *dost* is wooing the same girl he wants to wed. He becomes a *shatru* in the real sense. The friends turn foes, now swear undying revenge till the storm of misunderstandings clears and their *dostana* is revived.

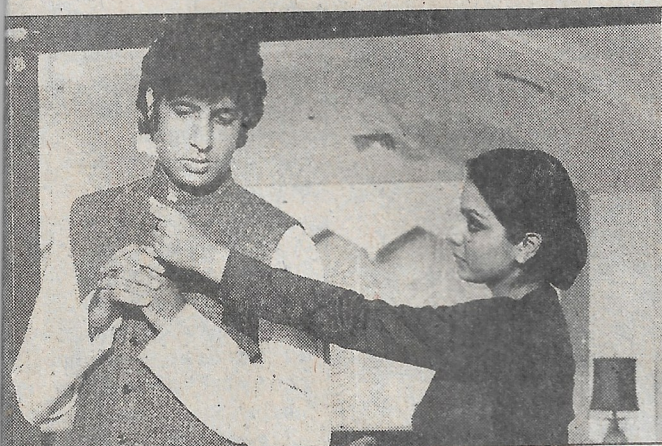


YAARANA (1981)

A village bumpkin, Kishen (Amitabh Bachchan) mesmerises his childhood friend, Bhishan (Amjad Khan) with his golden voice. Bhishan takes Kishen back with him to the city and makes a famous singer of him.



E FOREVER



it is Kishen's turn to pay the debt of friendship. He bails out his *yaar* who's mired in a conspiracy not of his making and proves that the love of true friends has the strength of an army.

KHUDGARZ (1987)

JEETENDRA and Shatrughan Sinha are the best of friends despite the great economic divide between them. However, a blow to Shatru's self-respect terminates the ties. A driven Shatrughan Sinha now has just one mission in life—to become a bigger man than his friend and humiliate him at every turn. Little does he know that his much-maligned friend has been backing him all the time, smoothing out his path to the top.

SAAJAN (1991)

Aman, a lame orphan (Sanjay Dutt), is indebted to his friend Akash (Salman Khan) for giving him a home and a place in his heart. The only way he can repay Akash is by fooling the girl he's fallen in love with



into believing that his Casanova friend who's also lost his heart to her, is the Saajan who's dazzled her with the sensitivity of his poetry. *Saajan* was quite obviously *Sangam* reworked with even a similar argument coming from the woman. The only difference was that in Lawrence D'Souza's romantic musical no one dies. Aman gets his true love while Akash con-



pregnant, the other two shield her. The child is left at an orphanage and the three girls head off in different directions. Years later, the child confronts them, telling them that the strength of their friendship was instrumental in depriving her of her mother's love and security.

KUCH KUCH HOTA HAI (1998)

THEY play ball and bend the rules, sing songs and take swings at each other. True blue buddies even though one of them is a boy and the

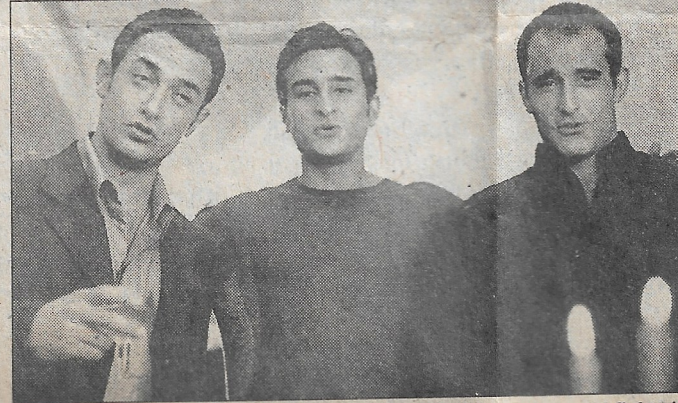


other a girl. Rahul (Shah Rukh Khan) and Anjali (Kajol) share everything till Rahul falls head over heels in love with the principal's daughter, Tina (Rani Mukherjee) and marries her. Anjali finally acknowledges that Rahul is more than just a friend. Heart broken, she drops out of college and Rahul's life.

Eight years later she's reunited with Rahul who's now a widower. His daughter and mother are dying to make a match between him with Anjali. But there is a catch. Anjali's engaged and to be married soon. Can the two friends ever become lovers?

DIL CHAHTA HAI (2001)

SAMEER (Saif Ali Khan) is always falling in love. Siddharth (Akshaye Khanna) falls in love, but with the wrong woman who doesn't recipi-



cate his feelings. Akash (Aamir Khan) doesn't believe in love and fights it at every turn. This lovable trinity shares a friendship that is more than just carefree holidays in Goa and shared private jokes. Even when a difference in opinion and differing career goals, keep them apart there's a sharing, caring and the solidarity that keeps them together and reunites them in a moment of crisis.

Dil Chahta Hai is an ode to the spirit of friendship, exploring its finer nuances, sans melodrama. It's easy to identify with the trio and empathise with their troubles because you have only to look into the mirror or at a friend and you'll see Akash, Sid or Sameer staring back at you. Many may argue that the film has a limited urban appeal but at the same time one can't help but agree with director Farhan Akhtar who insists that the language of friendship is universal.